

News-Social Letter ACTION

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Indianapolis, Indiana

January, 1953

"... I WAS A STRANGER AND ..."

Today the refugee problem provides us a concrete example of God in challenging the church. Stated baldly in statistical terms the situation is appalling. In Korea alone there are 10,000,000 refugees. Add 8,000,000 Indian refugees from Pakistan, 5,000,000 Moslem refugees from India, 2,000 Arab refugees in Palestine, 380,000 Bulgarian refugees in Turkey, 2,000 refugees in Greece, and in Shanghai, 5,000 more stranded by the sea. In Western Europe there are more refugees than there are people in the Dominion of Canada.

Assimilation, Migration, Starvation?

As Elfan Rees, Advisor of Refugee Affairs of the World Council of Churches, has pointed out, these individuals fall into three groups:

1. Those who can be assimilated;
2. Those who must be moved;
3. Those who will starve unless . . .

The first group is the largest and their plight is in many ways the most

ful. Among the people of this group one finds the homeless of Korea, Arab refugees in Palestine, the Indian refugees in Pakistan and the Indian refugees driven out of Pakistan and now existing in India. Real progress is being made toward integrating these people into the populations of the areas where they now live. The second group, those who must be moved, confront Christians with a much more crucial issue. Scattered across Europe and Asia are groups of people numbered in the thousands who never be assimilated into the populations of the areas where they are now living. In some cases their situation is so precarious that the alternative to starvation seems to be death or imprisonment. For example, 5000 refugees in Shanghai live, now, from day to day in peril of their lives. Homes for these people in other countries cannot be found.

The third group is in many ways the most pitiable of all. It is composed of those who for reasons of health or advanced age are not acceptable as migrants in many countries or those who must simply wait and wait and wait until the doors of immigration are barred by quota restrictions or other legal difficulties shall eventually be opened.

A World Problem

These, of course, are not problems of American Christians alone. Nor are Americans alone in what has already been done. The German churches, the minority churches of Belgium and France, and Christians in Norway, all have done heroic work dealing with the problems of refugees. The churches of Holland and Switzerland have done an especially interesting and praiseworthy job in accepting and caring for the old and handicapped.

Many governments have participated. The Turkish government, for example, with financial help from the

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"DASS WIR DICH LIEBEN ALL-ZUSAMM!"

The department of social welfare keeps a continuous flow of layettes, hospital supplies such as surgical gowns and gauze bandages, bedding and clothing going to Hilfswerk, the Protestant Relief Agency at Stuttgart, Germany. The following letter reveals the tremendous need. A very deep gratitude to the women's groups, Sunday School classes, youth

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HEADLINES FOR BROTHERHOOD!

"Why not suggest to our folks that instead of reading headlines they make them?" said one of the staff recently as we were talking about Brotherhood Week and Race Relations Sunday in February. Well, why not? A little planning and a little work, and everyone of us could have a hand in creating news of interracial understanding and fellowship!

On February 8, Christians all across the country will be celebrating Race Relations Sunday. From February 22, to March 1, many local communities and groups will be having Brotherhood Week programs of various sorts. These occasions are obviously not substitutes for the day to day practice of good intergroup relations. However, they do provide us a real opportunity for dramatizing the need for and the existence of tolerance, understanding and justice in the field of human relations.

It is extra work, of course, but Christian leaders should take every opportunity to provide leadership for such events. Why not call together now, a representative group in your community to plan cooperatively for special celebrations of Brotherhood Week? Why not plan now with the other members of your church staff to recognize Race Relations Sunday throughout the church in dramatic fashion?

Make your own headlines! Make them Christian! (Incidentally, clip them out and mail them in to the Department. We would like to see them.)

Most of us have remarked at one time or another, "I'll go my own speed in this matter of race relations. I don't need anybody else to tell me what to do in my own church and my own community." This seems fair enough and there remain only two questions. The first is, "Am I moving at all?" and the second is like unto the first, "Am I moving as fast in the right direction as God would have me move?"

It behooves Christians now and then to take stock. Where are we as individual Christians, as churches, and as communities compared to where we were last year, the year before or five years ago, in this matter of brotherhood? Have we made real headway in terms of greater understanding and appreciation of our brothers of other races? If so, have we personally contributed anything toward this progress, or have we simply ridden along on the efforts of other people?

B. H.

SOCIAL ACTION NEWS-LETTER

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U. N. SEMINAR NEWS

Of considerable interest to those who wish to attend the U. N. Seminar on World Order is the news received on December 13, that we are being allowed 30 more registrations by the U. N. Secretariat. This is the second time when at the urging of the Department of Social Welfare our quota of registrations has been lifted. We now will be sending 130 delegates to the seminar which meets February 9-12.

Tentative plans for a second section of the U. N. Seminar for that period of February 23-26 have been abandoned since we could get no guarantee from the Secretariat that our delegates would have opportunity to observe the committees and the commissions in action during this time.

So great has been the interest in the Seminar that the Social Welfare Department has already received 126 paid registrations and more than a hundred additional inquiries.

B. H.

EAST SIDE, SHARON, DOES IT

That a local church can carry on an effective program of missionary and social education is demonstrated by the East Side Church (Baptist-Disciples) at Sharon, Pennsylvania, under the leadership of its minister, E. C. Rowand, Jr. This fall, from October 5 through December 28, the church scheduled a "School for Christian Living," meeting each Sunday evening from 7:15 to 8:30, with recreation, fellowship and refreshments following the study period. Using the theme "Human Rights in America and Africa," the school was organized by age-groups, with competent leaders for each group. Beginning with a worship service, the group was then divided into six classes for study and discussion. Subjects encompassed included movies on Africa and readings from James Weldon Johnson's "God's Trombones," a discussion of the missionary work of David Livingstone, a motion picture, "We Hold These Truths," "The Bible and Human Rights," addresses by Negro pastors and a Jewish rabbi. Those who are interested might write to Mr. Rowand for a copy of his program leaflet.

J. A. C.

WASHINGTON ROUND-UP

♦ **Segregation:** Attention here has shifted from "What will Eisenhower do" to what will the Supreme Court do about public school segregation. For three days the legal giants for and against segregation presented their arguments in cases involving four States and the District of Columbia. What the Court's decision will be has even the "curb stone" lawyers guessing in this most fateful step in Negro history since the Dred Scott slavery decision 95 years ago.

♦ **Lawyers:** The proponents of racial segregation indicated the importance they attach to the five cases, which also will affect public school segregation in 17 other states. As chief counsel they named John W. Davis, the 79-year-old constitutional lawyer who defeated the government in the steel seizure case last spring. For those who are weak on defeated Presidential candidates, Mr. Davis was the Democratic torchbearer in 1924 against Calvin Coolidge, who won re-election, and Senator Robert M. LaFollett, Sr., of Wisconsin, who ran on the Progressive ticket. Mr. Davis formally argued the case for maintenance of segregation in South Carolina. Opposing him was 44 year old Thurgood Marshall, who master-minded the five cases now to be considered by the Court. He is the counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

♦ **Separate But Equal?** In cases involving South Carolina, Virginia, Kansas, Delaware and the District of Columbia, lawyers for Negro school children asked the court to overrule the separate but equal doctrine. Established in a railroad facilities case in 1896, *Plessy vs. Ferguson*, this doctrine has led the Court to uphold segregation in the past so long as "equal" facilities were furnished for both white and Negro children. The few graduate schools opened by the Courts to Negroes have been under this ruling. Now the opponents of racial discrimination, are asking whether segregation, as such, squares with the Constitution.

♦ **Equal Protection:** Segregation denies equal protection under the fifth and fourteenth amendments to Negro children. It implies second-class citizenship, results in grave psychological injury, and impairs the ability of children to learn. These were the basic arguments of the lawyers for the Negro children, with the attack against the 14th amendment rulings applying to the four states, and the 5th amendment to the District of Columbia where Congress makes the laws. Those upholding segregation cited the long legal precedent for the "separate but equal" doctrine. They pointed out that time or conditions do not necessarily change the definition of the Constitution; that the same Congress which enacted the 14th amendment also pro-

vided for separate schools in the District; and that in any event, any change in the laws should be by the state legislature or Congress and not the Court. To the arguments that time and conditions do not alter the definition of the Constitution, Justice Frankfurter, wryly remarked "Well, we do quite a bit with the Commerce clause."

♦ **The Decision:** The decision on the historic case probably will not be handed down by the Court for several months. Meanwhile, the guessing continues as to what the Court's decision will be. Lawyers familiar with Supreme Court practice say there are several possible decisions; (1) the Court could meet the issue squarely and outlaw racial segregation in the public schools; (2) it could decide that this is a political question on which the legislature and Congress must decide; (3) it could rule on each of the five cases separately, allowing the facts in each case to decide the issue. There are many variations of these three major possibilities. Whatever the Court's decision is it will establish a precedent for many years to come.

♦ **Immigration:** Churches and other groups which fought a losing battle against enactment of the McCarran-Walter Immigration bill in the last Congress, are taking steps to obtain revisions in the measure when the new Congress meets January 3, 1953. Passed over President Truman's veto, the measure was denounced during the campaign by both Presidential candidates. Since that time, church, labor, and nationality groups have continued their opposition to the measure in a series of 11 hearings held throughout the country before the President's Commission on Immigration and Naturalization. The Commission heard testimony in numerous cities in preparation for its report to the new Congress.

♦ **Church Testimony:** Testimony on the McCarran-Walter bill ran about 90 percent against the measure as presently written, with churchmen being among the most critical.

At the hearing in Washington, Dr. Walter W. Van Kirk, executive secretary of the National Council of Churches' Department of International Justice and Goodwill, called the Act "an affront to the conscience of the American people." He asked specifically that the "national origins" system of determining immigration quotas be abandoned.

This position was supported by Rev. Robert E. Van Deusen, representing the National Lutheran Council, and Msgr. Edward E. Swanstrom, executive director of the War Relief Services, National Catholic Welfare Conference. The views of the churchmen and others will be considered in the 83rd Congress by the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator William Langer, (R-N.D.), Chairman and the House Judiciary Committee, Rep. Chauncey Reed (R-Ill.), Chairman.

R. A. F.

ON SOCIAL FRONTIERS

Our Face is Red! In the December issue a paragraph appeared in this column giving 1951 expenditures for beer and tobacco as \$13,200,000 as compared to \$13,600,000 spent for the nation's health services. The correct figures are \$13,200,000,000 and \$13,600,000, respectively. Somewhere in the editorial process the last three digits were omitted. We apologize!

* * *

Fear Stifles Freedom of Speech. The United States is witnessing the most widespread suppression of free speech in its history, said Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas in an address in New York City on December 3rd on the occasion of receiving the first of the Lauterbach \$1,000 awards from the Authors Guild of America for service in the cause of freedom. Justice Douglas, who is perhaps the most outstanding defender of freedom of speech in the nation, said, "The suppression of free speech comes not from fear of being jailed, from fear of being dismissed from employment, banned from radio work, qualified for teaching or unacceptable for the lecture platform. These actions are effective and powerful. They often carry as much sting as a or a jail sentence . . . the safety of our civilization lies in making freedom of thought and freedom of speech vital, vivid features of our life. The only places where ideas can be used to capsule form are in the communist, Fascist or monarchial states."

* * *

Death Takes Top Labor Leaders. In month of November death struck down two of America's top labor leaders. First to go was Philip Murray, president of the CIO and also president of the Steel Workers Union. Death came in a San Francisco hotel as he was making final plans for the annual CIO convention to be held in Los Angeles. Days later, death came to William Green, president of the A.F. of L at his home in Coshocton, Ohio. Both men were trained in the rough and tumble battles between the United Mine Workers and the mine operators. Both knew the hard and bitter struggles through which union recognition and the right to collective bargaining were won. Murray was a devout Roman Catholic and Green was a Baptist. George Meany, Green's successor, came up through the same course as his predecessor. Walter Reuther, new head of the CIO, belongs to a later generation. He is imaginative, aggressive and competent. He too is deeply religious, holding membership in the Lutheran church. There are some indications that under new leadership the American labor movement may move closer to unity.

J. A. C.

GRASS ROOTS PLANNING!

One of the several activities of the Department of Social Welfare is its organizing of social action institutes. These are set up and carried on in cooperation with state commissions on Christian Action and Community Service.

On January 5, 6, the third such institute in Iowa will be held in Des Moines. In addition to the regular emphasis on leadership training in social action the institute will deal with the problem of mental illness. Robert A. Preston, chaplain in the V.A. hospital at Topeka, Kansas will bring two addresses on "The Church and Mental Health." There will be discussions and panels pertinent to the situation in Iowa.

On Sunday, February 1 a district social action institute will be held at Red Oak, Iowa. It is an effort to bring closer to the local church the state and national program of social action and to point up areas of action in local communities in which the church should have a part.

In cooperation with the Kentucky Ministerial Association, Transylvania College, The College of the Bible and Central Christian Church in Lexington, the department is holding a World Affairs Institute at Lexington, February 9, 10, 11. The program will deal with the proposed U.N. Human Rights Covenant and will also attempt to relate these world concerns to action at the local church level.

Illinois will hold its second institute at Decatur on February 16 and 17. Labor and industrial relations and the Church and its place in community life will be the featured topics of this institute. In addition, specific guidance for the planning of local church programs of action will be given. Dr. Grover Hartman, secretary of the Department of Social Welfare of the Indianapolis Church Federation and Mr. Al Whitehouse, regional director of the United Steel Workers and state director of the CIO for Kentucky, will be guest speakers.

Plans are under way for an institute to be held in Lincoln, Nebraska, October 11, 12, 13.

Institutes are designed to assist state and local committees on Christian Action and Community Service in building effective programs designed to tackle the social problems of their communities in the light and spirit of the Christian gospel.

R. E. M.

"THE ONLY WAR WE SEEK"

—is the title of a stirring volume of words and pictures by Arthur Goodfriend,

- ♦ about human need as it is written in the faces and lives of men, women and children across the globe who struggle in the grasp of poverty, disease, hunger and illiteracy;

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I WAS A STRANGER—Cont.

M. S. A. and the World Bank is in the process of assimilating 380,000 Bulgarian exiles.

The urgent need now is for emergency legislation which would allow perhaps 250,000 of those in most need to enter our country in the next three years. On March 21, 1952 the General Board of the National Council of Churches suggested: "On the national level it is desirable that Congress adopt such emergency legislation as may be required to complete the Displaced Persons Program to which our country is committed. This legislation should provide for the admission to the United States of (a) those who were processed under the Displaced Persons Act but for whom visas were not available on December 31, 1951, (b) an additional number of persons of those groups for whom a clearly insufficient number of visas were provided in the original legislation, (e.g. Volksdeutsche) and (c) our fair share, under proper safeguards, of those who have escaped from the 'Iron Curtain' subsequent to January 1, 1949, the cut-off date specified under the Displaced Persons legislation."

Such legislation, of course, seeks only to meet the immediate and critical problem. Christians must also be concerned with the issue of fair long term immigration policies which is raised by the McCarran Walter Act of 1952.

What Now?

The present responsibility of Christians is that of bringing pressure to bear upon our legislators in this coming session of Congress to pass short term, emergency laws that will open the way during the next three years for the entrance of perhaps 250,000 DP's and "Iron Curtain" refugees whose future is critical. Social action committees in local churches should begin now to study the refugee situation and to prepare to inform their congressmen of their resulting convictions. (The Department of Social Welfare will be glad to provide material upon which such study can be based.)

The second aspect of the American Christian's responsibility is that epitomized by our "Week of Compassion" offering. Through such voluntary responses as this and through funds contributed by our government through the U.N. High Commissioner for refugees, relief is provided for those refugees who might otherwise starve. Our government this past year has contributed nothing towards the care of these people for the coming year and unless there is a terrific outpouring of private funds it seems certain that many will starve.

B. H.

PROPOSED—A STUDY CONFERENCE ON ALCOHOL

The Christian Action and Community Service Committee of the Home and State Missions Planning Council, at its biennial meeting held in St. Louis, December 2-4, 1952, voted to sponsor, in cooperation with the Department of Social Welfare, a Disciples of Christ Mid-West Study Conference on Alcohol.

This conference is being tentatively planned for the summer of 1953 at Culver Stockton College, Canton, Missouri, though the question of a satisfactory date is still unsettled.

During the past two years this committee of 20, including representative ministers and laymen and inter-departmental national staff persons, has given special consideration to the problems of alcohol usage. The conference at Culver Stockton is a direct outgrowth of this committee's discussions and study.

Why? What? How?

One of the basic purposes of the conference is to bring together ministers, and local church leaders to consider together such questions as these: Two people are faced with the same frustrations—Why does one person drink? Why does the other person not drink?; What are the moral and ethical aspects of the problem?; What are the scientific data?; What is the relationship between drinking in the homes of students and drinking on college campuses?; What can local church groups do to help people meet this problem?; What are the preventive measures? The conference will bring together special resource persons and offer a training experience to persons who can and will assume leadership in a program of alcohol education in their local churches and communities.

A Literature Survey

Another important phase of this committee's work has been the gathering of current alcohol education literature being used by other denominational boards, national leagues, and special institutes. A sub-committee, appointed at the December meeting, is in the process of review and study of this material in terms of extending our own program of alcohol education.

Concern—Action—Service

Educational, social welfare, religious leaders and others alert to the problems of human relationships and development, view with a growing concern the increasing attack of alcohol upon the relationships of family and community life. The action of this committee on Christian Action and Community Service is an expression of this same concern and a decision to do something about it.

L. B.

“DASS WIR DICH”—Cont.

groups and churches who have sent gifts for general distribution.

December 1, 1952

“Dear Mrs. Milner,

This is to wish you and your friends a very happy Christmas and a blessed New Year. We here in Stuttgart are filled to the brim with gratitude towards you all. Since the end of October and the receipt of your gracious letter of October 9, we have received 25 packages with baby things and some hospital supplies. 22 of them have been forwarded to our Berlin headquarters from where they were acknowledged most enthusiastically, because they mean a tremendous help in their efforts to assist the refugees who keep streaming into West Berlin at a rate of 1000 per month. They were compelled to establish refugee camps in factory halls and bunkers where 2500 refugees live, sleeping on straw and covered with a single blanket—of US origin, by the way. You will realize what your parcels mean in a situation like this. The three last parcels we have kept in Stuttgart because, with Christmas approaching, we are almost snowed under with appeals from refugees in Bavaria and Schleswig-Holstein who cannot exist on their small unemployment rent and can never buy clothing for their kids.

Under this consideration we have decided to distribute the kindly announced large shipment—going via CWS to Hamburg—to Berlin, Holstein and Bavaria. One must keep in mind that the “older refugees” of seven years standing still need our help. They are too often forgotten over the plight of the recent refugee movement. I shall tell you exactly how these boxes were received and allocated, once they have arrived in Hamburg.

By parcel post you will receive some small items made by the mothers in the Soviet zone and refugee artists in Eastern Germany. They are intended to be a small token of the beneficiaries' gratitude for your generous and loving help and a proof of their goodwill and their appreciation. I hope that the package will get there in time for Christmas. The Christmas card gives a glimpse of another rather serious problem in our country. In 1952 the first children of German mothers and French or American negro fathers have left their nurseries and entered school. The German authorities have tried their best to “prepare” the parents of the other children for these unusual playmates and so far the experiences have been good, though in some instances the poor innocent kids were given the feeling that they do not belong. And this is the meaning of our Christmas card this year: *dass wir Dich lieben allzusamm.* (We should love everyone in all creation.)”

R. E. M.

1953-54 EUROPEAN STUDENT PROGRAM

“I am very happy about the understanding that he found in C—ville. When I think about you and C—ville I sometimes regain the hope that our world will be a little more peaceful, because the understanding is really not too difficult.” These words are the expression of thanks from the mother of one of the 1951-52 German high school exchange students sponsored by one of our church families. They are words of faith, too, in the exchange student program. Could it be that an exchange student program might well replace a soldier program in the years ahead?

For the fifth year the U. S. Department of State is bringing to this country German and Austrian high school students for a year's residence in American homes and communities. Various religious groups supply the homes and it is to be hoped that the Disciples of Christ will have enough families volunteer their homes for this project so that we may guarantee the placement of 12 or 15 of these fine young people for the school year 1953-54.

Anyone—an individual, a Sunday School class, CMF, CWF, CYF or a church interested in investing in world peace and friendship will find in this program a genuine opportunity. Write to the Department of Social Welfare for complete information and application forms.

R. E. M.

“THE ONLY WAR”—Cont.

- ◆ about America's present and future role in world politics;
- ◆ about the dynamics of failures and victories of democracy in answering these global cries of human despair, of physical and spiritual starvation.

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Published by Farrar, Straus and Young, Inc. for Americans For Democratic Action, it may be ordered from Sales Literature Department, UCMS, 222 South Downey Avenue, Indianapolis 7, Indiana. Price: \$3.00. L. B.